

IN THE CLAIMS

1 (1) Claim 1: (currently amended) A network switch comprising:
2 a CPU;
3 a memory system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;
4 a switch fabric system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;
5 a port controller having circuitry operable to attach to the switch fabric system;
6 a software application operable to execute on the CPU;
7 a Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL) system operable to execute
8 on the CPU; and
9 a switch device driver operable to execute on the CPU,
10 wherein the software application is operable to communicate with the FDDL
11 system, the FDDL system is operable to communicate with the switch device driver, the
12 switch device driver is operable to communicate with the switch fabric; and
13 a second software application operable to execute on the CPU,
14 wherein the second software application communicates with the FDDL system;
15 wherein the FDDL system comprises:
16 a base FDDL system;
17 a software application tower FDDL system; and
18 a second software application tower FDDL system,
19 wherein the base FDDL system communicates with the switch device driver, the
20 software application communicates with the software application tower FDDL system,
21 the second software application communicates with the second software application
22 tower FDDL system, and the base FDDL system communicates with the software
23 application tower FDDL system and the second software application tower FDDL
24 system.

(2) Claim 2: (cancelled)

1 (3) Claim 3: (original) The network switch of claim 1 wherein the FDDL system
2 defines an FDDL API for communication with the software application, and the FDDL
3 system defines a Switch Services API for communication with the switch device driver.

1 (4) Claim 4: (currently amended) The network switch of claim 2 1 wherein the
2 FDDL system defines an FDDL API for communication with the software application
3 and the second software application, and the FDDL system defines a Switch Services
4 API for communication with the switch device driver.

1 (5) Claim 5: (cancelled)

1 (6) Claim 6: (currently amended) ~~The A network switch of claim 1 further~~
2 comprising:
3 a CPU;
4 a memory system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;
5 a switch fabric system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;
6 a port controller having circuitry operable to attach to the switch fabric system;
7 a software application operable to execute on the CPU;
8 a Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL) system operable to execute
9 on the CPU;
10 a switch device driver operable to execute on the CPU;
11 an independent software application operable to execute on the CPU; and
12 an independent software application shim operable to execute on the CPU,
13 wherein the software application is operable to communicate with the FDDL
14 system, the FDDL system is operable to communicate with the switch device driver, the
15 switch device driver is operable to communicate with the switch fabric, the independent
16 software application communicates with the independent software application shim and
17 the independent software application shim communicates with the switch device driver.

1 (7) Claim 7: (original) The network switch of claim 6 further comprising a second
2 software application operable to execute on the CPU,

3 wherein the FDDL system defines an FDDL API for communication with the
4 software application and the second software application, and the FDDL system defines
5 a Switch Services API for communication with the switch device driver.

1 (8) Claim 8: (original) The network switch of claim 6 wherein the FDDL system
2 comprises:

3 a base FDDL system;

4 a software application tower FDDL system; and

5 a second software application tower FDDL system

6 wherein the base FDDL system communicates with the switch device driver, the
7 software application communicates with the software application tower FDDL system,
8 the second software application communicates with the second software application
9 tower FDDL system, and the base FDDL system communicates with the software
10 application tower FDDL system and the second software application tower FDDL
11 system.

1 (9) Claim 9: (currently amended) A network switch comprising:

2 a CPU;

3 a memory system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;

4 a switch fabric system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;

5 a port controller having circuitry operable to attach to the switch fabric system;

6 a protocol means for providing a service to a network system;

7 a Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL) means for communicating
8 with the protocol means; and

9 a switch device driver means for communicating with the FDDL means and the
10 port controller;

11 an independent protocol means for providing an independent service to the
12 network system; and

13 an independent protocol shim for communicating with the independent protocol
14 means and the switch device driver means.

1 (10) Claim 10: (original) The network switch of claim 9 further comprising a second
2 protocol means for providing a second service to the network system,
3 wherein the FDDL means communicates with the second protocol means.

1 (11) Claim 11: (original) The network switch of claim 9 wherein the FDDL means
2 defines an FDDL API for communication with the software application, and the FDDL
3 means defines a Switch Services API for communication with the switch device driver.

1 (12) Claim 12: (original) The network switch of claim 10 wherein the FDDL means
2 defines an FDDL API for communication with the protocol means and the second
3 protocol means, and the FDDL system defines a Switch Services API for communication
4 with the switch device driver means.

1 (13) Claim 13: (currently amended) The network switch of claim 10 A network
2 switch comprising:

3 a CPU;

4 a memory system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;

5 a switch fabric system having circuitry operable to attach to the CPU;

6 a port controller having circuitry operable to attach to the switch fabric system;

7 a protocol means for providing a service to a network system;

8 a Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL) means for communicating
9 with the protocol means;

10 a switch device driver means for communicating with the FDDL means and the
11 port controller,

12 wherein the FDDL means comprises:
13 a base FDDL means for communicating with the switch device driver means;
14 a protocol tower FDDL means for communicating with the protocol means and
15 the base FDDL means; and
16 a second protocol tower FDDL means for communicating with the second
17 protocol means and the base FDDL means.

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(14) Claim 14: (cancelled)

1 (15) Claim 15: (currently amended) The network switch of claim 9 14 further
2 comprising a second protocol means for providing a second service to the network
3 system,

4 wherein the FDDL means communicates with the second protocol means.

1 (16) Claim 16: (currently amended) The network switch of claim 9 14 wherein the
2 FDDL means comprises:

3 a base FDDL means for communicating with the switch device driver means;
4 a protocol tower FDDL means for communicating with the protocol means and
5 the base FDDL means; and
6 a second protocol tower FDDL means for communicating with the second
7 protocol means and the base FDDL means.

1 (17) Claim 17: (currently amended) A method of providing communications over a
2 network system utilizing a first protocol and a second protocol, the method comprising
3 the steps of:

4 receiving information at a port controller in a first protocol from a first node
5 machine;
6 communicating the information from the port controller to a switch fabric;

communicating the information from the switch fabric to a switch device driver within an operating system;

communicating the information from the switch device driver to a Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL); and

communicating the information from the FDDL to a first protocol client;

receiving additional information at a port controller in a second protocol from a first node machine;

communicating the additional information from the port controller to a switch fabric;

communicating the additional information from the switch fabric to a switch device driver within an operating system;

communicating the additional information from the switch device driver to a Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL);

communicating the additional information from the FDDL to a second protocol client;

receiving the information from the switch device driver at an FDDL base within the FDDL;

passing the information from the FDDL base to a first protocol FDDL tower within the FDDL; and

sending the information from the first protocol FDDI tower to the first protocol client.

(18) Claim 18: (cancelled)

(19) Claim 19: (currently amended) The method of claim 18/17 wherein

all communicating between the switch device driver to the FDDL is done through a switch services API; and

4 all communicating from the FDDL to the first protocol client and the second
5 protocol client is done through an FDDL API.

1 (20) Claim 20: (currently amended) The method of claim 4& 17 further comprising
2 the steps of:

3 defining a switch services API for communication between the switch device
4 driver; and

5 defining an FDDL API for communication between the first protocol client and
6 the FDDL.

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(21) Claim 21: (cancelled)

1 (22) Claim 22: (currently amended) A computer-readable medium having stored
2 thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the steps comprising:

3 receiving information at a port controller in a first protocol from a first node
4 machine;

5 communicating the information from the port controller to a switch fabric;

6 communicating the information from the switch fabric to a switch device driver
7 within an operating system;

8 communicating the information from the switch device driver to a Forwarding
9 Database Distribution Library (FDDL); and

10 communicating the information from the FDDL to a first protocol client;

11 receiving additional information at a port controller in a second protocol from a
12 first node machine;

13 communicating the additional information from the port controller to a switch
14 fabric;

15 communicating the additional information from the switch fabric to a switch
16 device driver within an operating system;

17 communicating the additional information from the switch device driver to a
18 Forwarding Database Distribution Library (FDDL);

19 communicating the additional information from the FDDL to a second protocol
20 client;

21 receiving the information from the switch device driver at an FDDL base within
22 the FDDL;

23 passing the information from the FDDL base to a first protocol FDDL tower
24 within the FDDL; and

25 sending the information from the first protocol FDDL tower to the first protocol client.

(23) Claim 23: (cancelled)

1 (24) Claim 24: (currently amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 23 22
2 wherein

3 all communicating between the switch device driver to the FDDL is done through
4 a switch services API; and

5 all communicating from the FDDL to the first protocol client and the second
6 protocol client is done through an FDDL API.

1 (25) Claim 25: (currently amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 23 22
2 having further stored thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the steps
3 comprising:

4 defining a switch services API for communication between the switch device
5 driver; and

6 defining an FDDL API for communication between the first protocol client and
7 the FDDL.

(26) Claim 26: (cancelled)

1 (27) Claim 27: (currently amended) A network system comprising:

2 a network switch comprising a CPU, a memory system having circuitry operable
3 to attach to the CPU, a switch fabric system having circuitry operable to attach to the
4 CPU a port controller having circuitry operable to attach to the switch fabric system, a
5 software application operable to execute on the CPU, a Forwarding Database
6 Distribution Library (FDDL) system operable to execute on the CPU, and a switch device
7 driver operable to execute on the CPU,

8 wherein the software application is operable to communicate with the FDDL
9 system, the FDDL system is operable to communicate with the switch device driver, and
10 the switch device driver is operable to communicate with the switch fabric;

11 a backbone; and

12 a workstation,

13 wherein the workstation is logically connected to the backbone, and

14 wherein the backbone is logically connected to the port controller of the network
15 switch;

16 a second software application operable to execute on the CPU,

17 wherein the second software application communicates with the FDDL system,

18 wherein the FDDL system comprises:

19 a base FDDL system;

20 a software application tower FDDL system; and

21 a second software application tower FDDL system,

22 wherein the base FDDL system communicates with the switch device drivers, the
23 software application communicates with the software application tower FDDL system,
24 the second software application communicates with the second software application
25 tower FDDL system, and the base FDDL system communicates with the software

26 application tower FDDL system and the second software application tower FDDL
27 system.

(28) Claim 28: (cancelled)

1 (29) Claim 29: (original) The network system of claim 27 wherein the FDDL system
2 defines an FDDL API for communication with the software application, and the FDDL
3 system defines a Switch Services API for communication with the switch device driver.

1 (30) Claim 30: (currently amended) The network system of claim 28 27 wherein the
2 FDDL system defines an FDDL API for communication with the software application
3 and the second software application, and the FDDL system defines a Switch Services
4 API for communication with the switch device driver.

A1 (31) Claim 31: (cancelled)

1 (32) Claim 32: (original) The network system of claim 27 further comprising:
2 an independent software application operable to execute on the CPU; and
3 an independent software application shim operable to execute on the CPU,
4 wherein the independent software application communicates with the
5 independent software application shim and the independent software application shim
6 communicates with the switch device driver.

1 (33) Claim 33: (original) The network system of claim 32 further comprising a second
2 software application operable to execute on the CPU,
3 wherein the FDDL system defines an FDDL API for communication with the
4 software application and the second software application, and the FDDL system defines
5 a Switch Services API for communication with the switch device driver.

1 (34) Claim 34: (original) The network system of claim 32 wherein the FDDL system
2 comprises:

3 a base FDDL system;

4 a software application tower FDDL system; and

5 a second software application tower FDDL system

6 wherein the base FDDL system communicates with the switch device driver, the
7 software application communicates with the software application tower FDDL system,
8 the second software application communicates with the second software application
9 tower FDDL system, and the base FDDL system communicates with the software
10 application tower FDDL system and the second software application tower FDDL
11 system.

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